

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO USIA WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2599

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KON

CINCPJC

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USIAC

REF: USIA CIRCULAR 6618

1. RELOCATION OF PACIFIC STARS AND STRIPES TO U.S. BASE
IN THE PHILIPPINES-- WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN RAISED
INFORMALLY WITH EMBASSY --WOULD POSE SERIOUS PROBLEMS.

2. MARTIAL LAW REGIME IN PHILIPPINES REGARDS STARS AND
STRIPES AS UNCONTROLLED SOURCE OF POTENTIALLY HOSTILE NEWS,
WHICH IT IS. INDIGENOUS PRESS IS RELATIVELY RIGOROUSLY
SUPERVISED BY REGIME AND SUBJECT TO CHASTISEMENT FOR
UNAUTHORIZED COMMENT. ALTHOUGH REGIME HAS NOT
YET ATTEMPTED TO CENSOR STARS AND STRIPES, IT HAS ON
SEVERAL OCCASIONS SHARPLY OBJECTED TO AND CLAMPED
DOWN ON ITS CIRCULATION OUTSIDE BASE AREAS WHERE IT IS HOT ITEM
WITH REGIME'S CRITICS.

3. LOCATION OF STARS AND STRIPES PUBLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION
FACILITIES ON BASES WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY RESULT IN FURTHER UN-
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AUTHORIZED DISTRIBUTION OFF THE BASES AND WOULD HEIGHTEN

REGIME'S INTEREST IN AND CONCERN WITH THE NEWSPAPER. SHOULD REGIME ATTEMPT TO CLAMP DOWN ON DISTRIBUTION LEAKS, OR CONCEIVABLY TO IMPOSE CENSORSHIP ON PAPER NOT EVEN EDITED IN PHILIPPINES, ITS OBJECTIONS WOULD ADD ONE MORE STRAIN TO U.S. PHILIPPINE BASE RELATIONS. IF WE ATTEMPTED TO COMPLY WITH REGIM'S OBJECTIONS, WE MIGHT WELL RUN INTO OBJECTIONS FROM U.S. CONGRESS TO SUBJECTING OUR TROOPS TO FOREIGN CENSORSHIP.

4. ASIDE FROM POLITICAL PROBLEMS OUTLINED ABOVE, US/RP MBA DOES NOT SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MILITARY NEWSPAPER. ONLY CLAUSE IN LOCAL AGREEMENT THAT MIGHT BE RELEVANT IS GENERAL PROVISION RELATION TO ESTABLISHMENT OF SALES AND SERVICE FACILITIES IN THE BASES (ARTICLE XVIII, MBA OF 1947), BUT IN CONTEXT OF BASE AGREEMENT DISCUSSIONS THAT ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER GOP WOULD REGARD ARTICLE XVIII AS ADEQUATE AUTHORIZATION.

5. IN PRINCIPLE WE ARE OPPOSED TO CAUSING ANY MORE PROBLEMS FOR OURSELVES THAN WE HAVE TO. THAT PRINCIPLE IS FORTIFIED BY FACT WE ARE IN MIDST OF WIDE RANGING NEGOTIATIONS WITH GOP ON VARIETY OF ISSUES INCLUDING BASES. ON BALANCE, WE HOPE MORE SATISFACTORY HOME THAN PHILIPPINES CAN BE FOUND FOR STARS AND STRIPES. AMBASSADOR CONCURS. LEE

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